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THIRD ANNUAL REPORT OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF COMMON SCHOOLS IN CONNECTICUT: TOGETHER WITH THE THIRD ANNUAL REPORT OF THE SECRETARY OF THE BOARD. May, 1841.

REPORT OF THE BOARD.

The Board of Commissioners of common schools, respectfully submit the Annual Report required of them by the act of 1839.

First, as to their own doings.—In addition to the specific duties assigned to them by the General Assembly, the Board have prosecuted, through their Secretary, substantially the same measures which have been pursued since their first organization.

By personal inspection of the schools, written and personal communication with parents, school officers and teachers, public addresses and the Connecticut Common School Journal, the Secretary of the Board has aimed to ascertain the condition of the schools and of the public mind respecting them, to disseminate a knowledge of existing defects and desirable improvements, and to awaken and enlist a vigilant superintendence on the part of committees, and a more intelligent interest in behalf of common education in the whole community.

These measures have, it is believed, been as successful as the difficulty, delicacy and extent of the work to be accomplished, will admit.

Second, as to the condition of the common schools and the means of popular education generally.

The accompanying report of the Secretary of the Board with the documents annexed, embraces a more minute survey of the history and actual operation of our system of common schools, than was ever before submitted to the Legislature.

By direction of the Board, instead of the statistical returns heretofore required of school visitors, agreeable to the provision of the act of 1833, the visitors were requested to present their views as to the condition and improvement of the schools, in a series of connected remarks. An abstract in part of the communication made by them in compliance with this request, has been prepared by the Secretary.

This document is of the highest value. It contains the suggestions of many of the most intelligent and experienced friends of common schools from every section of the state, as to the actual workings of our school system in several important particulars. While they speak almost uniformly of the increase of parental and public interest which has followed the recent action of the Legislature, they show that a wide-spread and paralyzing apathy hangs over the public mind in relation to the whole subject, and

that the evils heretofore pointed out by the Secretary in his annual reports, exist to a greater or less extent in every school society in the state. The most important of these evils are, an undue reliance on the avails of public funds for the support of common schools; the large number of children who attend private schools, or no school public or private; the immense sacrifices of the means and privileges of education from irregular and late attendance; the inconvenient, repulsive and unhealthy state of most of the district schoolhouses; the inequality of the education of children arising out of the inequalities of school districts; the variety of ages, studies and classes in the same school; the diversity and insufficient supply of school books; the imperfect qualifications and constant change of teachers; the disastrous neglect of the primary branches; the deficiency of school apparatus and libraries; and above all other defects, the absence of parental visitation to the school, and co-operation with the teacher in the education of the children.

On all these topics there is a remarkable coincidence in the views of school visitors. By consulting the abstracts which the Secretary of the Board has made of official documents respecting the organization and administration of the school systems of other states, it will be seen that these and similar evils exist to some extent elsewhere, and that vigorous measures are recommended or adopted to remove or remedy them. This abstract, in connexion with the selections heretofore made and distributed to the several districts, by direction of the General Assembly, presents a complete survey of the means and condition of common school education in Europe and the United States. Without pointing to the system or schools of any other state or country as models for our imitation or adoption, the Board would refer to the experience of Holland for the efficiency which an active, intelligent and vigilant superintendence or inspection can give to a system of public instruction; of Prussia for the value of seminaries for the training of teachers and of a classification of schools: of England and Scotland for a demonstration of what can be done in infant and juvenile schools for early physical, intellectual and moral education, not only in the school room but on the play ground; of Massachusetts for a system of common schools, supported entirely by a tax on property, and particularly to its successful operation in some of the large towns of that commonwealth; and of New York for what can be done in less than thirty years, towards establishing common

schools, supported in part by public funds, in part by tax on property, and in part by tax on parents who send to the schools, and towards promoting the general intelligence of the community, by a library of well selected books in every one of her ten thousand districts.

From these various documents it is evident that while Connecticut yields to no state or country for her early, continued and liberal provision for the education of all her children, her true policy is to persevere in those measures which will ascertain and disseminate a knowledge of all existing defects and desirable improvements among school societies, districts, parents and teachers, and to incorporate from time to time such modifications as experience elsewhere shall prove to be advantageous and suited to her circumstances.

Third, plans for the improvement and better organization of the common schools.

Agreeable to a resolution of the last General Assembly, the Board have prepared a draft of a revised school law, in which the various enactments of existing laws are brought together under their appropriate heads.

This draft is accompanied by remarks of the Secretary of the Board, on the history and present state of the law relating to schools. These remarks, suggested from three years devotion to the duties of his office, and an extensive observation of the actual working of our school system, are worthy of the serious consideration of the legislature.

In conclusion, the Board would renew the recommendation made in their former communications to the General Assembly.

1st. That such aid be afforded by legislative provision, as will insure the continuation and wide circulation of the Connecticut Common School Journal. Thus far this publication has been sustained by individual liberality, and principally by the sacrifices of the Secretary of the Board. Its circulation too has been comparatively limited. Still the experience of three years, it is believed has shown that such a Journal, devoted exclusively to the interests of common school education, and sent to every district, monthly or semi-monthly, with explanations of any questions and difficulties arising under the school law, with improved plans of schoolhouse architecture, and other articles calculated to interest, improve and assist school officers, teachers, parents and children, will form a valuable auxiliary in the work of making our common schools more useful and more worthy of the progress of society, and the abounding means of the state.

2d. That some inducement be held out to school societies or districts, to provide for themselves a common school library, as one of the most recent and important means of the intellectual and moral improvement of the community. The interest which such a library would create among the older scholars at school, the assistance it would afford the teacher in oral instruction, and the intellectual tastes and habits it would create and foster in the community, must greatly extend the present advantages of the district schools, and lead to great improvements in them, to meet the higher educational wants of society.

3d. That some provision be made for the establishment of normal schools, or seminaries for the training of teachers, where a practical knowledge of the best methods of arranging the classes and studies, and conducting the government and instruction of district schools, can be communicated and illustrated. One such school, under an experienced principal and assistant, with a model school connected with it, where theory can be carried into practice, and an example given of what a district school ought

to be, would draw to it numbers of our young men, and young women, to improve the qualifications they already possess for teaching, and gain the experience and skill which are necessary.

An appropriation for this object will supply a radical defect in our system, and give an impulse of the most powerful and salutary character to the cause of school improvement.

All of which is respectfully submitted.

WILLIAM W. ELLSWORTH.

SETH P. BEERS,	LORIN P. WALDO,
DENISON OLMSTED,	FRANCIS A. PERKINS,
ANDREW T. JUDSON,	SAMUEL D. HUBBARD.

Hartford, May, 1841.

REPORT OF THE SECRETARY OF THE BOARD.

To the Board of Commissioners of Common Schools,

GENTLEMEN:

At the close of another year, I herewith respectfully submit my Third Annual Report, as Secretary of your Board, in relation to my own doings and the condition and improvement of the common schools.

In the course of the year, I have visited seventy-six school societies in seven out of the eight counties, and by personal observation in the schoolroom, and inquiry among parents, school committees, teachers and children, have endeavored to ascertain the degree of parental and public interest in relation to common schools; the number of children, especially in cities and manufacturing villages, who were in no school, public or private; the condition of schoolhouses; the qualifications, compensation, and success of teachers; the discipline, instruction, studies, books, and manners of the schools, and the means generally of popular education. During these circuits, I have addressed such persons as were disposed to come together on public notice, on topics suggested by the existing state of the schools, and of the public mind in relation to their improvement. At these meetings, and through the Journal, I recommended particularly that meetings of similar character should be held, as far as practicable, in every school district, under the direction of the school visitors, for the purpose of awakening and enlisting a more vigorous, intelligent, and liberal public opinion in their support. Among the topics which might be profitably presented and discussed on such occasions, the following were suggested:

The advantages, individual, social, and civil, of the more complete education of every child in the State, and the necessary connection of ignorance, especially of moral ignorance, with poverty, vice, and crime.

The prevailing defects and capabilities of improvement in physical, intellectual and moral education, as given in our common schools.

The best modes of securing the regular and punctual attendance at school of all the children of a district or society, and of enlisting the more active co-operation of parents in this and other objects connected with their education.

The evils resulting from the location, construction and internal arrangements of schoolhouses as they now are, and the best plans for improving them and for building new.

The disadvantages of small or poor districts, and the best way of assisting them so as to equalize the opportunities of common education in the same society or town.

The evils of crowding a large number of children of all ages and various studies, in a great variety of text books, under

one teacher, and the remedies for them—1, by establishing a separate school for the younger children in the summer and autumn, and another for the older children in the winter, each under a teacher of the appropriate qualifications; or 2, by employing an assistant for the younger children; or 3, by a union school for the older children of two or more adjoining districts; or 4, by a central school of a higher order for the more advanced children of the whole society or town.

The too prevalent and ruinous neglect of the primary branches, and of the younger children, and the importance of furnishing the latter in every instance with a slate and pencil to use in drawing or writing, or in any innocent way to amuse and improve themselves when not otherwise employed.

The evils of a great diversity and inadequate supply of books in the same branches of study.

The evils of a constant change of teachers from male to female, and the importance of giving permanent employment to well qualified teachers of both sexes in the same school.

The various useful applications of the black-board and other cheap and simple apparatus, and the importance of resorting more to visible illustrations in instruction.

The establishment of district libraries, or of a society or town library, divided up into as many cases as there are districts, to be passed in succession through each, for the older children of the schools, and the adults generally of the district.

The purchase of books on education, and especially on the theory and practice of teaching, for teachers.

The formation of associations of teachers for mutual improvement, and the visitation of each other's school accompanied by a few of their best scholars.

The importance of parents visiting the schools, and the practicability of organizing an association of the mothers of a district or society for this and other objects connected with the common school.

The assembling of all the children with their teachers and parents, once a year or oftener, for an examination, exhibition, or at least appropriate addresses and other exercises.

Besides these and kindred topics more directly connected with the condition and improvement of the schools, others relating to the organization and administration of them, by law, can be profitably considered, such as—

The creation of a county or senatorial district board, to examine teachers and give certificate of qualifications, or of a superintendent to visit all the schools within the above limits, and report on their relative condition.

The establishment of normal schools, or seminaries for the education of those who design to become teachers, with model schools attached, where a practical knowledge of the best methods of arranging the studies, and conducting the instruction and government of children can be acquired.

The principle upon which the distribution of the public money should be made, whether by actual attendance in school, or the number of children in the district, or the amount of money voluntarily raised, or the amount of its grand list, or whether any, and if any, what conditions should be attached to its enjoyment.

Whenever consulted, as I have been almost daily by letter or otherwise, for advice, explanation or information relative to the school law, for plans of schoolhouses, for the amicable settlement of controversies, or in any way to promote the usefulness of common schools, I have freely rendered any assistance in my power.

As the source of desirable information to parents, school officers and teachers, and an indispensable auxiliary in my labors, I have continued the publication of the Connecticut Common School Journal. As no provision was made for its support by the Legislature, this step has subjected me to an expense above all receipts for subscribers or otherwise, equal to one third of all the compensation allowed to this office. Should the experience of three years have demonstrated that the publication of such a Journal, even with a limited circulation, and that circulation not embracing those who need it most, has been attended with salutary results, it is hoped that some legislative

provision will be made to continue it beyond the close of the present volume, and send it to every school district in the State.

To enable the Board and the Legislature to profit by the experience of other States, where the common school system is in operation, I have made an abstract of such official documents and information as I could collect, respecting the organization and administration of these systems, and the efforts which are making to improve the condition of the schools.

To assist the Board in revising and consolidating the various laws relating to the education of children, and schools, I have prepared a review of the most important legislative enactments on the subject from 1650 to 1840, with some remarks on the leading provisions of the law as it now stands.

Instead of the statistical information heretofore required of school visitors respecting the several district schools, they were requested, agreeable to the direction of the Board, to communicate their views respecting the condition of the schools in several specified particulars, with plans and suggestions for their improvement, as well as any alteration in the organization and administration of the system. Communications have been received from more than two-thirds of all the towns in the State, an abstract of which is herewith presented. Although this document was necessarily compiled with great haste, and embraces only a small portion of the returns received and examined, it constitutes the most valuable evidence which has yet been collected, as to the existing state and wants of the common schools.

I have also received several reports prepared by school visitors of the several societies, giving a minute account of their own proceedings, and of the appearance of the schools at their visitations. As models of fidelity on the part of these officers, and evidence of the great usefulness of such local reports, from their necessary influence on scholars, teachers, parents and the community generally, I have appended two to the above abstract.

I intended in this communication to have presented the results of my observation and inquiries in the school-room, and elsewhere, as to the arrangement and classification of the schools, the succession and extent of the several studies, the methods of discipline and instruction generally pursued, and other kindred topics, for the purpose of demonstrating the importance of some legislative effort to establish seminaries with model schools attached, where a practical knowledge of all that relates to the arrangement, classification, studies, methods of teaching and governing common schools could be given to such as propose to become teachers. But the preparation of the accompanying documents has occupied so much of the time allotted to this work, that I shall confine my remarks to such features in the organization and administration of our school system as are discussed in the communications of school visitors.

1. PUBLIC AND PARENTAL INTEREST.

In its organization our school system is eminently popular, and the efficiency of its administration depends mainly on the voluntary action of school societies and districts, and the personal co-operation of parents with the teacher. The interest manifested by the com-

munity, and by parents in particular, in relation to common schools, is the evidence and measure of their prosperity. The absolute necessity of awakening and securing this interest as the condition and source of all permanent and extensive improvement, has become more and more deeply impressed on my mind. The most liberal appropriations on the part of the State, and the most perfectly devised system, will utterly fail, unless the former secures the co-operation of the community, and the latter becomes imbued with the life of public sentiment. With these views as to the importance of public and parental interest, I have aimed to ascertain its present condition, and the means best calculated to increase its amount and activity.

Towns, school societies and districts, as such, contribute little or nothing to support schools. More than five ninths of the annual expenses are paid by permanent funds, and less than one ninth, by a tax on the property of the community.

The annual and other meetings of school societies are thinly attended, and the meetings of school districts, although they are better attended, are not characterized by liberal appropriations for building and repairing schoolhouses, and the employment of well qualified teachers, for a suitable period of the year.

Parents do not make sufficient efforts to secure the regular and punctual attendance of their children at school, to supply them with the requisite books, to ascertain their progress by visiting the schools, and inquiring into their studies at home, to respect, to encourage and co-operate with the teacher, by inviting him to their society and sustaining him in all cases of necessary discipline, and to read, hear and converse on the condition and improvement of the common schools.

The causes which have led to the present apathy are, a defective organization of the system by which the school interest is dis severed from all the great interests of the community acting as towns, or as religious societies, and the support of schools is practically removed from parents and towns to permanent funds, the avails of which are enjoyed without the necessity of any corresponding effort; the absence of all arrangements by which teachers may be properly qualified for their duties, and the inspection and supervision of the schools may be exercised by persons to some extent independent of local prejudices and influences, and in all cases capable, from their intelligence and experience, of suggesting improvements in every department of the system; the want of a just appreciation on the part of parents of the nature, means and ends of education, and the importance in its social and political bearings of making the common school at once good and cheap, so as to become practically the broad platform for the elementary education of all the children of the community.

The remedies for this want of parental and public interest are:

1. To make it the duty of towns acting as school societies to maintain a sufficient number of common schools of different grades for the free, useful, and equal education of all their children and youths, and to distribute the school money on such conditions and in such a manner as to aid those who are willing to help themselves, and to conform to the requirements of the law.

2. To provide in every county, in connection with existing institutions, an opportunity for those who are now teachers to improve themselves, and at least one thoroughly organized normal school, or teachers' seminary, where the greatest practical skill, elevation, and efficiency, can be given to the common school teacher, and a demonstration be made of what can be accomplished by the employment of such teachers in all the public schools.

3. To subject the common schools not only to local supervision, but to the inspection of one or more persons, practically acquainted with the subject, in each county or senatorial district, who shall not only examine teachers, visit schools, confer with parents, teachers, and school officers, but publish semi-annually a detailed report of what has been done and seen, with plans and suggestions for the improvement of the schools.

4. To send to every school officer and teacher a periodical sheet, devoted exclusively to official school documents, and to such other articles as may be calculated to promote the prosperity and usefulness of the common schools.

5. To hold out inducements to school societies or districts to establish libraries of well selected books, by which the instruction of the schoolroom and the art of printing may be made practically available to the poor as well as the rich.

2. DISTRICTS.

From the operation of various causes, the territory or families of school societies have been divided into about 1650 school districts, differing from each other in territorial extent, population, pecuniary ability, and more than all, in the degree of public and parental interest manifested in the common schools. The avails of the school fund, and generally, of the town deposit fund and of local funds, are distributed to these districts according to the number of persons between the ages of 4 and 16, and constitute the main reliance of the several districts for the compensation of teachers. This diversity in the means and influences which determine primarily the character of a school, results in the most obvious and disastrous inequality in the education of children in different districts. If a child is born or located in a populous district, or in a small one, where the energy and liberality of a few individuals make up for its weakness in numbers and other disadvantages, he can enjoy the instruction of a well qualified teacher for ten or eleven months in the year during his whole school life, and thus attain the highest advantages provided by our system of common schools. But if, on the other hand, he is born in a small district, and especially, in a district where little or no effort is made on the part of the parents, or the community, he can only attend a district school from four to five months in the year, kept usually in a small, inconvenient and unhealthy schoolhouse, and taught by a cheap, and generally an incompetent teacher. True it is that the advantages of a large and wealthy district are too often thrown away by the districts themselves, and the children located there do not, by regular and punctual attendance at school and diligence in their studies, profit to the extent they might; and it is equally true, that many persons make up in after life for the imperfect and inferior

school advantages enjoyed in small districts by the energy of superior talent, by self-training, and the habits of self-reliance and self-respect created by our civil and social institutions. But speaking generally, it may be safely said, that there are at least four hundred districts in the State, and one or more in every school society, in which the children are doomed to an inferior and imperfect education, and to all its disadvantages.

Much may be done not only to increase the amount and quality of common school education, as will hereafter be shown, but to distribute the advantages of this education much more equally than at present to children in different districts. To accomplish this last object, a general revision of the extent and limits of school districts is desirable, for the purpose of defining the boundaries of all of them more accurately, and of adapting the size to the altered state of the population. In such a revision many small districts might be enlarged by adding portions of larger adjoining districts, and in some cases by annexing the inhabitants of small districts to others, when the same can be done without subjecting any of the children to an inconvenient distance. This revision can be made at any time by school societies, but as the object is a desirable one in other points of view, it should be done immediately. Whenever any district or individual is aggrieved by the action of the society or their committee in this respect, the party should have the liberty of appeal to some disinterested tribunal, whose decision in the case should be final.

Whether any revision or alteration of districts is made or not, the present rule and practice of distributing all school money among districts according to the number of persons between the ages of 4 and 16 in each, should be changed, and provision made, as the basis of all distribution, that every district shall have the means of employing a teacher of the requisite qualifications for at least three months in winter and three months in summer, or for a continuous period of six months in the year. This will require that the small and weak districts receive more than they now do, but not more than enough to accomplish the purpose—the useful education of all the children of the society. If this calculation is based on the practice which prevails in more than 1500 districts, of supporting but one common school for all the children of the district, and of employing a male teacher in winter and a female in summer, and the rate of teachers' wages for the State, say \$17 for males and \$8 for females, every district must receive at least \$75, viz. \$51 to employ a male teacher for three months in the winter, \$24 to employ a female teacher in the summer, or \$12.50 for a male or female teacher for six months. This does not include any provision for the board of teachers, or fuel, which is left to the district, or to parents. If \$75 be taken as the smallest sum with which any district should be furnished, and the avails of the school fund and town deposit fund together be estimated at \$1.75 for every person between the ages of 4 and 16, there are 60 districts which now receive, each, only \$17.50, and require, each, \$57.50 more, or \$5.75 on each person enumerated; 177 which receive \$35, and require \$40, or \$2 on each person enumerated; and 454 districts which receive \$52.50 and will require \$22.80, or less than \$1 on each per-

son enumerated, to enable them to employ a teacher or teachers of the legal qualifications for six months in the year at the average rate of wages. The course I would recommend is this: that a certain sum, say \$50, be distributed to each school district, without reference to the number of children in each, and the remainder be divided among the several schools (including the schools of a higher order) according to the ratio of attendance for the preceding year. This mode will enable every district to come up to the minimum standard, and make it the interest of the district and parents to secure the regular attendance of the children.

There are many considerations connected with this feature of our school system which cannot be presented here. In another place I shall show the necessity of schools of a higher grade than the district school, if we would increase the amount and quality of common school education, and do away with the necessity of private schools.

3. SCHOOLHOUSES.

The work of improvement has commenced in this department. More new schoolhouses have been erected, and old ones repaired on correct principles, within the last three years, than for twenty years previous. But from personal knowledge of many hundred school houses, and minute written descriptions of many hundred more, in more than two thirds of all the school societies, and the uniform testimony of school visitors, there is pressing need of immediate and still greater improvement. The following is a summary of the present condition of nine-tenths of all the district schoolhouses in the state.

Location.—They stand in or on the public road, so that the attention of children is disturbed by every passing object; not unfrequently in bleak and unsheltered situations, where they are exposed to winter's storms, and to the concentrated radiation of a dry sandy soil; in the neighborhood of noisy trades and places of public resort; without any other playground than the highway, or adjoining private property; and without appropriate and necessary out-buildings, whereby the health, manners, and instinctive feelings of decency and propriety in children and youth are exposed and injured.

Size.—They are small, with a prison-like narrowness and lowness of dimensions, and yet with less cubic space to each scholar than is allowed to every prisoner in the state prison or county jail; without a separate entry for boys and girls; without scraper, mat, hooks, and shelves, so that habits of neatness, order and propriety can be cultivated; without sufficient space for the proper seating and necessary evolutions of the scholars; without a raised platform and desk for the teacher; and without any rooms for recitation or other useful purposes.

Light.—They are lighted by windows on three or four sides, without blinds or curtains, so that there is much inconvenience and danger from cross lights, as well as from excess of light reflected from the book, or falling directly on the eyes. The window sills are so low, and the situation of the building so near the street, that passing objects and events out of doors are sure to attract the attention of the scholars.

Ventilation.—There are no sufficient means to effect

a constant supply of pure air, by allowing the escape of such portions of it as have become impure from the breathing of teacher and pupils, and from burning fires, and by the introduction of that which is pure and of the right temperature from without. In consequence of this neglect, especially in the winter, the children of our district schools are obliged to breathe an impure, stagnant, and oppressive atmosphere, the effects of which can be seen at any time after the school has been in service an hour, and especially in the afternoon, in the pale and wearied countenances, the languor and uneasiness of body and mind, especially in the younger children, and the exhaustion and irritability of the teacher. The evil consequences of neglect in this particular often extend beyond the schoolroom. The seeds of disease, especially of consumption, if not sown in such an atmosphere, are rapidly quickened and developed, in the lungs of such as are constitutionally exposed to pulmonary complaints. Many devoted teachers, I have reason to believe, have contracted sickly habits, and ultimately fallen victims to diseases, whose early beginning might be traced back to the vitiated atmosphere of the schoolroom. In more than seven-eighths of the schoolrooms which I have visited, the children were allowed less than one-half the quantity of pure air which is deemed absolutely necessary for the health and the cheerful and successful labor of prisoners in the state prison at Wethersfield, or the county jails at Hartford, New Haven, and Norwich.

Temperature.—They are very imperfectly warmed, or protected from the rush of cold air through cracks and defects, in the doors, windows, floors, and plastering. In a large portion of the districts there are no woodsheds, and the wood is scattered all about the premises, not cut, or split, but left to be incased in ice, or covered up in snow. Parents do not seem to estimate the consequences of neglect in this particular;—the loss of a considerable portion of the morning session, the aching feet and hands, the benumbed faculties, the interrupted recitations, and loss of temper, and finally the head-aches, stiff necks, rheumatisms, and catarrhs, which result from the want of that prudence and forecast which make their own homes pleasant and cheerful. There is no sufficient provision for securing a uniform temperature in different parts of the room, so that one portion is frequently overheated, while the more distant is suffering from cold.

Seats and Desks.—In the construction and arrangement of seats, due regard is not had to the convenience, comfort and health of those who are to occupy them, or the constant and complete supervision of the school by the teacher. The desks are usually attached to the wall on three sides of the room, so that for a large portion of the time the faces of the scholars are turned away from the teacher, and a portion of them, at least, have every facility and temptation to look out at the windows. The seats are too high, and the relative heights of the seats and desks are not properly adjusted to each other. I have never seen a schoolroom, which has not been built or repaired within three years, where the feet of every child, properly seated, could rest on the floor; where the elbows and shoulders of those who were engaged in writing or cyphering were

not raised too high; and where there was, in all cases, suitable support to the seats against which the children, and especially the younger ones, could lean, when tired, from an upright position. Nothing but the fear of punishment, or the frequent application of it, can keep a live child still on such high, hard, backless slabs as are provided, and handed down from generation to generation, in many of the district schools. They do not, cannot, and should not, sit still long under such circumstances, especially as no occupation is allowed for eyes, mind, or muscles, and they are placed in roasting proximity to the fire. It is rank cruelty and injustice to enforce it.

The seats and desks are not so arranged that each scholar can go to and from his seat, change his position, have access to his books, attend to his own business, be seen and approached by the teacher, without incommoding some other person.

In consequence of neglect respecting seats and desks, awkward postures, distortions of the limbs and form, sometimes amounting to disease, and especially spinal affections, are produced. To these wretched articles of school furniture, and to the imperfect ventilation of the schoolroom, are to be attributed much of the noise and restlessness of the school, and the lasting distaste which so many entertain to study, books, and their teachers.

Repairs.—Bad as the original location, construction and furniture of many of the schoolhouses are, these original defects are made still more wretched and perilous, from the omission of timely and necessary repairs. Districts neglect to make provision for it, and the district committees do not like to take the responsibility of doing their duty, lest the bill of expense should be complained of, or not be allowed. The consequence of this is, much inconvenience and suffering to the children, and ultimately more expense for fuel, or for doctors' bills, than the repairs would have amounted to.

From this hasty glance at our district schoolhouses, and from the aching remembrance which every graduate of the district schools must have of their inconveniences, it is evident that something more should be done to improve them. They now stand in mournful and disgraceful contrast with all other public edifices; with our churches, retreats, asylums, and prisons; with our dwelling houses; and indeed every other structure intended for the convenience of man or beast. I can point to less than sixty buildings devoted to academies and private schools, where less than 3000 children receive or perfect their education, which cost more than all the 1600 district schoolhouses, where more than sixty thousand children attend school.

As a specimen of district schoolhouses, combining many desirable improvements, and avoiding the evils which have been touched upon in the above remarks, I append some cuts, and a description of the new building in district No. 6, Windsor.

To carry forward the work of improvement in this department, sounder views than now generally prevail must be diffused through the community, and improved plans for the location, construction, and internal arrangements of schoolhouses must be brought within the reach of every district. An appropriation of a few hundred dollars for the last object would procure vari-

ous plans for schoolhouses capable of containing from twenty to two hundred pupils, and to cost from \$300 to \$3000.

It should be made a condition to the districts drawing public money, that the schoolhouse be such as the health and convenience of the scholar and teacher demand; and of this the school visitors should be empowered to judge.

If the district committee are not already clothed with this power and duty, they should be authorized and directed, on the refusal or neglect of the district to make suitable provision for fuel, repairs, and a supply of all the appendages and accommodations of a schoolhouse, to do the same, and to assess the expense on the property of the district.

Whenever it becomes necessary to select a site for a new schoolhouse, or to change the site of an existing house to adapt it to the altered state of the population, the committee of the society should be empowered to select the same, and to locate by metes and bounds the quantity of land necessary, and to assess the true value to the owner or owners; and on the payment of such valuation, the land should become the property of the district. An appeal should be allowed to some disinterested tribunal, which should be empowered to grant such relief as may be just and equitable, and whose decision should be final.

4. ATTENDANCE AND NON-ATTENDANCE.

Of the 85,000 children between the ages of four and sixteen in the state, it is found, by comparison of the returns of school visitors for the last three years, that not more than 65,000 attend the common schools for any period of the year; about 12,000 attend private schools; and from 7 to 8,000 attend no school, public or private. If to the 65,000 be added 1,000 children under four years of age in the summer schools, and 5,000 persons over sixteen in the winter schools, we have 71,000 persons as the aggregate attendance at the common schools for any period of the last year.

It is found, by comparison of school registers accurately kept in different sections of the state, and in different districts representing the varying circumstances of city and country, large and small, much and little public interest, that the average attendance of persons of all ages amounts in summer to about three-fifths, and in winter to about two-thirds, of the whole number registered.

Thus the state provides from the school fund alone more than \$24,000 for the education of persons who never enter the common school during the year. Of the whole amount expended on the common schools, and of all the privileges of these schools, two-fifths in summer and one-third in winter is lost by irregular attendance.

The average length of the schools for the year is eight months, but many of the younger children attend only in the summer, and of the older, in the winter, so that the average time which each person attends does not amount to more than six months. The school age extends nominally from the age of four to sixteen years; but, as far as my observation goes, it will be nearer the facts in the case if it is estimated at ten years—the period between five and fifteen. These two elements give five years as the period during which our children attend school. And yet, if the previous calculations

are correct, from one-third to two-fifths of this period is lost by irregularity of attendance—thus reducing the actual school age of many children in the state to less than four years. Short as this period is, it is amply sufficient to teach the same children more than is now taught in most of our district schools to children from the age of five to fifteen, with the long vacations, irregular attendance, and constant change of teachers which characterize these schools, provided it could be devoted continuously and regularly, with a vacation of two months in the year, judiciously distributed, under a well qualified teacher.

But the irregularity of attendance is not only a loss to those who practice it of the time and privileges of the school, during the days of absence, but it impairs the value of the school when they do attend, interferes with the classification and recitations of others who attend regularly, and adds in various ways to the labors and trials of the teacher.

The causes and remedies of the evils of non-attendance in the common schools, or in any school, common or private, and of late and irregular attendance, cannot be discussed at large here. I can only touch on a few leading considerations connected with the subject.

Much of the attendance in private schools, as will be shown in another place, arises from the imperfect character of the common schools, and is encouraged by the present mode of sustaining the latter exclusively by public funds, and a tax on those alone who send to them. Until in our cities and populous villages primary schools for young children, and generally in the state one or more schools of a higher order than the district school are established, private schools of a similar character will be supported by those who are abundantly able to provide for the education of their own children, and by others, who, appreciating the advantages of good schools, are willing to expend liberally from limited means to secure these advantages to their children. The experience of some societies and districts in this state, and of several cities in other states, demonstrates beyond question that the improvement of the common schools by the employment of good teachers, and by the mode above suggested, is always followed by an increase of attendance from children, who before attended private schools.

Much of the non-attendance of persons over four and under sixteen, on any school, is made up of children under eight, and of those over twelve years of age. The former are children of idle, vicious, and ignorant parents, who are not conscious of any intellectual wants themselves, and of course make no provision for the moral and intellectual culture of their offspring. The latter are the children of selfish parents, who are ready to provide the means of their own support, and sometimes of their vicious and criminal indulgence, by their children's labor, even at the sacrifice of their future usefulness and happiness. It is difficult to provide a remedy broad and thorough enough to cure this evil of non-attendance at school of children of the proper age; still the elementary education of every child must be secured in some way.

As a preliminary step, a sufficient number of schools of different grades must be provided by towns, school societies, or districts. This is not the case at present in any city in the state. If, in addition to those now at

school, those who are in no school, public or private, should apply for admission at the schoolrooms at present provided in these places, they could not be seated, much less instructed properly by the teachers now employed. To improve the education of the poor, especially in cities, a class of primary schools located wherever there are fifty or sixty children, and of evening schools for the older children, must be established, and the instruction in them must be the best, because it is all that many of these children will ever obtain.

When established, the public schools must be supported in such a manner, that their prosperity and success shall be a matter of public and parental interest combined. To accomplish this, the public must be required to contribute to their support, and, as far as practicable, have a direct interest in securing the attendance of children in them. This may be done by making it the duty of societies or districts to raise by tax an amount equal to what they receive, and by graduating the amount received, not to the number who can go, and ought to go to school, but to the number who actually do go. This first provision would induce the public to look after the expenditure of their own money at least, and the last would make it the interest of school committees and parents to see to the regular and punctual attendance of the children; for by so doing the amount of public money coming to the districts would be increased, and the rate per scholar to be paid by the parents diminished.

But other provisions will be necessary. The necessities and cupidity of parents, and the self-interest of employers, and the proprietors of factories and manufacturing establishments, are liable to co-operate to withdraw children at too early an age from the schoolroom, for the profits of their labor. This gross injustice to the children, and the community in which such children are afterwards to live as parents and voters, must be prevented, by humane laws, firmly administered.

No child under fourteen years of age should be employed to labor in a factory or manufacturing establishment, unless such child can show a certificate of school attendance for at least three months of the twelve next preceding; and the period of their daily employment should be limited to eight hours, and their employment at night entirely prohibited, so as to admit of their regular attendance at evening schools.

Any owner or proprietor of any factory or similar establishment who shall employ a child under fourteen years of age, contrary to these provisions, should forfeit the sum of twenty dollars, to be recovered by the district committee, before any justice of the peace, for the use of the common school in the district; and the district committee that neglects to prosecute every violation of these provisions should be made liable to the same forfeiture, recoverable by any member of the district, in the same way, and for the same use.

Any person under sixteen years of age, bound to labor as an apprentice, or employed in any capacity for the year, should be entitled to three continuous months' schooling, and for a proportionate time when employed for six months.

5. EXAMINATION OF TEACHERS AND VISITATION OF SCHOOLS.

The requirements of the law in these particulars have been more faithfully complied with during the past two years than before. In most school societies the board of visitors have appointed a committee of one or two persons, who have examined all the teachers, visited all the schools, made out reports respecting their condition and improvement, for the information of the Board, and their several societies, and for the time thus employed, they have received in most instances the compensation allowed by law. As an example of fidelity in all these particulars, and of the beneficial results, I can refer, among other instances, to Farmington.

I have heard of no complaint against this provision from school societies, where the work has been faithfully done, and where there is a willingness to make some effort for the improvement of the schools. Objections have generally been made in quarters where before the passage of the act of 1839, there was a mere formal compliance with the requisitions of the law, and not always even that.

It is the opinion of the most intelligent friends of schools, that a county or senatorial board for the examination of teachers, and the inspection of schools, would impart new vigor to the local administration of our school system, give a healthy stimulus to teachers, sift out those who are qualified, collect and disseminate the best plans of school government and instruction, and in various ways awake an interest in the community, and secure the progress of improvement.

In this opinion I fully concur. Such a board composed of teachers, who had proved by their success, that they know what the qualifications and duties of a good teacher are, and of visitors who are experienced in visiting schools and comparing the merits of different methods of education, would constitute a competent and independent tribunal for the examination of teachers, and introduce an intelligent, vigilant and efficient school inspection. In Holland, the whole fabric of public instruction, rests on such a system of inspection, and in no country are the advantages of education more widely diffused. In Ohio, such a board of examination exists. And in New York, county superintendents have been recently created, to visit and examine all the schools and school districts committed to their charge, and to inquire into all matters relating to the government, instruction, books, studies, discipline and conduct of such school, and the condition of the schoolhouses, and of the districts generally. They are also required to make such suggestions to school officers, teachers, and parents, as may be called for by the state of the schools, or the districts, and in every way to promote sound education, and advance the prosperity of the schools. Each superintendent is allowed two dollars for each school district, and not exceeding five hundred dollars in the year.

6. TEACHERS.

I can do little more under this head, than reassert the general conclusions of my former report, confirmed as they are by the united voice of the school visitors.

While only seventeen hundred teachers, including assistants in the large districts, are required in all the common schools as at present organized, the number

of different teachers actually employed, amounts to not less than twenty-seven hundred.

Female teachers are employed in the summer schools almost universally, and male teachers in all the large, and in most of the small districts in the winter. Not one in a hundred, except in cities and central districts, continues in the same school through the year, or even for two summers or two winters in succession.

Many of the teachers are young, with but little knowledge of the world, or experience in self-government, and most of them entered on their office, with no other preparation than such as the district school affords, and propose to continue in it, no longer than until some more lucrative business presents.

The wages of teachers, although they have advanced within the last three years, do not bear a fair proportion to the rewards of skill and industry, which intelligence and enterprise can command in various other fields of labor, or to the compensation paid in private schools.

Female teachers are employed for a longer period of the year than formerly, and as far as my own observation extends, they have shown themselves competent to teach all that can be, with any prospect of success, required of districts schools.

As a class they have a quick perception of the wants of the young, an instinctive fondness and tact in communicating knowledge, especially by means of oral methods, a patience under the manifold trials of the schoolroom, a gentleness of manners, a purity of character, and an insensibility to the temptations of ambition and avarice, which admirably adapt them to the holy responsibilities of education, especially in the early period of life. The wages of this class of common school teachers are far below the real worth of their services; are not equal to the compensation realized in private schools, or in the factory and the work-shop; and are altogether disproportionate to the average compensation of male teachers.

Teachers as a class are better prepared to instruct than to govern schools, and to teach the more advanced, than the primary studies. Their attainments are beyond their tact and skill in communication, or their ability to call into vigorous and harmonious action, the various powers of the mind and heart.

Many of the difficulties in instruction and government, experienced by teachers, arise out of the present constitution of the district school, composed as it is of every variety of ages, of both sexes, of all the studies, from the lowest rudiments to the highest, of small but numerous classes, and the want of parental co-operation with the efforts of the teacher at home, both in instruction and discipline.

The practice of "boarding round," still prevails very generally in the country districts. It may not be objectionable to young men, to be thus deprived of a regular and quiet home, but to young ladies of education and refinement, it is attended with so many inconveniences, that many are driven from this their appropriate field of labor and usefulness rather than encounter them.

Much can be done to improve the existing qualifications of teachers, and to make their services far more efficient.

Teachers might be assisted in the purchase, or at least to the perusal of the best books on education, and especially of that class which have special reference to

the duties and labors of the teacher in the schoolroom. Every lawyer, physician and clergyman is required to pursue a specified course of study, before he is thought entitled to the confidence of the public. He buys or reads the best works relating to his profession, especially those which treat of its practical duties, and aims to keep up with the knowledge and spirit of the times, in his own department. It is a discouraging circumstance, that so few teachers are willing to make any efforts themselves, to gain that information which the study and experience of others have bequeathed for their benefit.

Teachers should be invited, encouraged and assisted to associate together for mutual improvement. The attainments of solitary reading should be quickened by the action of living mind. The acquisitions of one should be tested by the experience, the approbation, or the strictures of others. New advances in any direction should become known, and made the common property of the profession. New hints should be taken up and followed out by trial and investigation. Old and defective methods should be held up, exposed and abandoned. The sympathies of a common pursuit, the interchange of ideas, the mutual benefit of each other's experience, the discussion of topics which concern their common advancement, would make every teacher feel that he was a member of an important body, and thus increase his self-respect. The community too, would thus be made to feel the importance of the profession in its aggregate strength, and accede to it a higher social and pecuniary consideration.

They should be authorized and encouraged by school committees, to visit each other's schools, and in this way, witness other methods of discipline and instruction than their own. Teachers, no more than others, will continue long in practices which their own observation convinces them are not as good and profitable as those pursued by others in their neighborhood, and which others can compare and contrast with their own. By means of conferences and visits here spoken of, improved methods of arrangement and instruction, have in the course of a single winter been transferred from one district to nearly all the districts in a society.

But the most effectual way of improving the qualifications of teachers, of creating in them and in the community a proper estimate of the true dignity and usefulness of the office, of carrying out into practice the soundest views of education, is to establish at least one institution for their specific training.

Such an institution, in the outset at least, had better be confined to the preparation of female teachers. The course of instruction should have especial reference to common schools in the country. The model school should, as far as practicable, bear a close resemblance in its elements to an ordinary district school. The pupils should be such as are willing to meet a portion of the expense of residence at the institution, by the assistance they would render at such times as would not interfere with the studies and exercises of the place.

The whole spirit of the institution should be such as to invite those only to come, who have a natural fondness for the office of teaching, and are animated in their preparatory work, by higher motives than the hope of pecuniary returns they are likely to receive.

The establishment of one or more schools of this

description, is recommended in nearly every communication from school visitors. They have been objected to, in four instances, for the following reasons. "They are of foreign origin." They need not necessarily be modelled, and indeed ought not to be, after foreign institutions. They should be adapted to meet our own wants, to raise up Connecticut teachers for Connecticut schools. The objection is as valid against institutions for the deaf and dumb, or the blind, or the insane, or colleges, or even the common school, which is only an improvement on the parochial schools of Germany.

"They are unnecessary: our colleges, academies and private schools, can furnish teachers for the higher order of common schools, and these last for the district school." It is possible that much might be done in this way, but at present, there are no adequate means provided in any of the institutions for the specific training, or the apprenticeship required. We have good teachers, but they have become such, by improving their native tact by experience in the schoolroom; but who knows how many minds and hearts have been ruined or injured by the experiments of beginners. The best teachers universally acknowledge the value and necessity of such schools.

"Those who are educated there, will not become teachers for life, or teachers in common schools." They will however be more likely to make teaching a profession, than any other class. It would answer a good purpose, even if they taught for a few years. To provide against the last result, the institution should be confined to females, and those who receive its benefits, should come under obligations to teach two or three years in common schools; but above all, they should be such only as are actuated by the highest devotional feelings.

"The teachers thus educated, will be few compared with the number of schools." But a beginning must be made, and in the present state of the public mind, and of the public schools, a single demonstration of what can be done, and of the best manner of doing it, is needed. The good which a few teachers properly trained, would do, would not be confined to the districts in which they labored. Their schools would become model schools for other districts, and the awakening influence of their example and precept, would be felt all around them. Teachers who have not enjoyed the advantages of such training, would strive to excel those who had, and thus a wholesome spirit of emulation would be provoked among teachers.

"Districts will not pay wages sufficient to employ teachers who are thus prepared." There are districts which pay liberally, and who look long and far to find good teachers. Such districts would go directly to such an institution for their teachers. Besides an improvement in the qualifications of teachers, would to some extent increase the demand for them, and the demand would increase the compensation.

"The time required for this preparation, is more than most teachers can give." Although it would be desirable to extend the course of instruction to two years at least, still much can be accomplished in a brief period. Six months residence in such an institution, with daily practice or observation in the model school, or even a shorter period would be of incalculable service.

"The expense of such an institution, will be great." Like other good institutions, it will cost something,

but the cost will depend somewhat on the scale with which it is commenced. An appropriation of \$10,000 on the part of the state, united with what could be raised by individual subscriptions, would be sufficient to make a fair trial.

7. STUDIES.

Spelling, reading, writing and arithmetic are taught in every district school, and grammar, geography and history to some extent in most. In addition to these, there are classes in natural philosophy, and other branches, which it is very desirable should be pursued during the school life of every person, but which cannot, with due regard to thoroughness in the primary studies, be taught in our district schools as they are. Vocal music has been introduced to some extent with the happiest results.

There is a disposition, or at least a temptation, on the part of most teachers to hurry over the primary branches, and to neglect the young children. This is a radical error, and impairs the value of all after attainments.

Spelling, instead of being confined as it too generally is, to a mere repetition of long columns of words, no matter on what principle they are arranged, should be taught to some extent at least, in connection with reading and writing, otherwise it becomes of little practical use.

Reading, as generally conducted, is the most tedious and defective exercise in the school, instead of being made the most attractive, spirited and useful.

Arithmetic is not commenced with a due understanding of the first principles, and continued in such a way, as to give every scholar the mastery of the practical application and combination of their principles, or those habits of attention and reflection, which this study properly pursued, is so well calculated to form. The arithmetic of daily life, is not often acquired in the school.

Writing is not taught in connexion with drawing and composition, or so thoroughly taught in any way, as to enable many of the graduates of the district school, to put their thoughts into the form of a business or friendly letter rapidly, legibly and grammatically.

The mastery of the English language, combining spelling, reading, speaking, grammar and composition, should be the leading object of the district school, as far as intellectual education is concerned.

The department of religious and moral instruction, is too much overlooked. The Bible is used as a reading book, or as a religious exercise, at the opening of the school, but in such a manner as not always at least to inspire a proper respect for its divine character, or to give a practical knowledge of those great truths which it contains, and which are so important to be known and felt, by every one who has an obligation to perform, a right to maintain, or a futurity to expect.

As to physical education, there is nothing taught respecting it, except by a practical violation of all its great principles in the location, light, temperature, ventilation, seats and desks, of the schoolhouse.

8. BOOKS.

Since the act of 1839, authorizing school visitors to prescribe regulations respecting books, some progress has been made in diminishing the diversity of school

books in the several studies, not only in the same school, but in all the schools of the same society. It is still a serious evil, increasing the number of classes, reducing the number in each class, shortening the time of each recitation, taking away all opportunity for oral instruction, besides increasing unnecessarily the school expenses of parents. It is loudly complained of in the returns of school visitors, and various plans are suggested by them to remedy it. Among them, it is proposed, that the legislature should authorize the board to make a selection, or appoint a select committee of both houses—or appoint a committee for each county, or each senatorial district, or a convention of the school visitors of each county or senatorial district to prescribe or recommend the selection for general use.

The most effectual and least objectionable mode of introducing something like uniformity, would be through a teachers' seminary. The principal and directors of such an institution, would be obliged to select the best books in each study, and the teachers trained there, would naturally prefer the books which they had studied, and in which they had received their own lessons how to teach. The selection of books by such a seminary, would be the best recommendation they could have.

Much more than is now done can be effected by school visitors. Let them make the best selection they can. Let the list be reported to the society meeting, if thought advisable, for their approbation, and entered on the register of each school, with direction that the teacher introduce no other book or admit any new book of a different character, until the list is changed by direction of the school visitors. If the list is forwarded to the authors and publishers of the several books, and to such merchants in town, as keep a supply of school books, parents will find no difficulty in procuring those recommended or prescribed.

9. APPARATUS.

The blackboard is the only article of apparatus which has found its way to any considerable extent into the common school, and teachers are too frequently unacquainted with the manifold uses to which even this cheap article can be applied. To the want of globes, maps, diagrams, models, specimens of real objects, and modes of communication based upon, and adapted to them, much of the vague generalities and inefficiency of school education of every name and grade may be traced. The knowledge of practical life, is acquired by daily experience,—it is something which we have heard, seen, tested, or worked out by our own hands, or our own reflections. The more of this kind of knowledge that can be obtained in the common school, the better, and the subsequent success in the great field of self-culture, will depend on the thoroughness and accuracy of the habits of observation, comparison, classification and reasoning formed in the schoolroom.

Little children, who are now required to sit still, on seats without any backing to lean against, and so high that in many cases, their feet cannot rest on the floor, and without any occupation for the hands, the eye or the mind, might be usefully employed with a slate and pencil, in printing the alphabet, combining letters, syllables, words, and whole sentences, and in copying the outlines of angles, circles, solids, maps, diagrams or

real objects. Some advance in this respect has already been made.

10. GRADATION OF SCHOOLS.

The practice almost universal in the state, is to provide but one school in a district, for children of all ages, from four to sixteen, and even from three to eighteen, in every variety of study, from the alphabet to the highest branches of an academical education, under a female teacher in summer, and a male teacher in winter. The variety of ages, necessarily leads to a corresponding variety of studies. The variety of studies, requires a corresponding number of classes, at least, and this number is increased by the diversity of school books, and the different stages of proficiency of the several scholars. The number of classes, calls for an equal number of recitations, and as the number in the same study, and the same book, is small, the teacher can devote but little time to each recitation, and his explanations, if he has time to make any, must necessarily be brief and confined to a few. He is thus obliged to spread his labors over a great extent of surface, and must possess the rare talent of governing and instructing equally well the old and the young, the simplest rudiments and the highest branches of common school education. The difficulty in this respect, is to some extent lessened by the practice of sending the small children in the summer, and the oldest in the winter; and of employing a female for the former, and a male teacher for the latter. But as there are a few at least of each extreme in the school at every period, the evil still remains. Besides the change of teachers from summer to winter, and from female to male, and from year to year, leads to the employment of at least one thousand teachers more than are necessary, destroys all permanence in the profession, introduces a constant change of school books, and proves a loss of from one to four weeks of each season, during which time the teacher is becoming acquainted with the attainments and characters of the pupils, and the pupils with the teacher's methods of instruction.

To remedy in all, or in part, the evils thus summarily presented, it is proposed, that so far as practicable, the younger children with the primary studies, be assigned to female teachers, and the older children and more advanced studies, to male teachers, and that both classes of teachers be well qualified for their appropriate grade of schools. This it is thought can be done in one of the following modes.

1st. By employing in every district numbering over fifty children in school, two or more teachers, as is now done in more than eighty districts. There are several hundred districts, which could adopt this course.

2d. By the union of two or more adjoining districts, for the purpose of maintaining a union school for the older children of such associating districts, while the younger children of each, are left in the district schools. There is scarcely a school society in the state, where at least one such union district cannot be formed.

3d. By the establishment of a central school, where the circumstances of the society will admit of its being done, for the older children of all the districts.

By the establishment in each society of one central school, or one or more union schools, for the older children, and more advanced studies, the district school will

be relieved of at least one half the number of classes and studies, and the objections to the employment of female teachers in the winter, on account of their alleged inability to govern and instruct the older boys, will be removed.

As the compensation of female teachers is less than one half that paid to males, every instance of the employment of a female teacher in place of a male teacher in the district school, will save one half of the wages paid to the latter, which can be expended in increasing, partly the wages of the former, and partly the wages of the male teacher in the union or central school. It will be found that the same amount of money now expended in three districts, on three female teachers in summer, and three male teachers in winter, will employ three female teachers for the whole length of the summer and winter school, and one male teacher for the winter, at an advance of one third or one half of the average rate of wages paid to each.

This arrangement will thus lead to the more permanent employment of a larger number of female teachers, at an advanced compensation, thus holding out an additional inducement to females of the right character and qualifications to teach in the district school. It will also reduce the demand for male teachers, except of the highest order of qualifications, and increase the wages of those who are employed. In both ways it will diminish the expense, the loss of time, and other evils of a constant change of teachers in the same school, and give permanence and character to the profession of teacher.

It will enable the teachers of the several schools, to introduce studies, discipline and instruction, appropriate to each. In the district primary school, the younger children need no longer be subjected to the discomforts and neglects which they now experience, or the primary studies be crowded one side, to make room for the higher branches. In the union or central school, the scholars, coming as they would, from the primary school, well grounded in the fundamental branches, will be prepared to enter profitably upon studies which are now pursued to advantage, only in academies and other private schools of a similar grade. Thus all that is now accomplished in the district school will be better done, the course of study very much extended, and the advantages of a more thorough and complete education, be more widely diffused.

In the cities of this state, there is a pressing necessity, as well as every facility for carrying out as complete a system of common schools, as exists in any state or country. And yet when compared with some of the large towns of other states, such as Boston, Lowell, Nantucket, Charlestown and Roxbury in Massachusetts, [See appendix, education in other states,] the attendance in the public schools of our cities is less, the attendance in private schools greater, the appropriations for school purposes smaller, the course of instruction less complete, the supervision of committees less vigilant, and the interest of parents and the community less active and intelligent. The explanation is simply this: in the cities of this state, there are not enough public primary schools, conveniently located, to gather in the younger children, and no high school (except at Middletown) with two departments for the older boys and girls. The place of these schools, open

alike to rich and poor, is occupied by private schools, in which the tuition is so high, as effectually to exclude the poor.

11. PRIVATE SCHOOLS.

Judging from the returns of school visitors, and my own inquiries, there is a private school, of no higher grade than what the common school should occupy, in every district numbering over one hundred persons between the ages of four and sixteen, and in many which are much smaller; and where no such school exists, the children of professional, educated and wealthy parents are sent elsewhere to private schools, or academies.

These schools have their origin in the real or supposed deficiencies of the common schools, or the superior wealth, intelligence, or estimate of education, of comparatively few parents. Their establishment, too, is fostered by the practice of supporting common schools almost exclusively by public funds, and a tax on such parents and guardians only as send children to them. Men of property and education, being no longer taxed for this class of schools, expend their money willingly and liberally on schools of their own.

When compared with the district schools, the school buildings are more spacious, attractive, and commodious; the scholars are less numerous, and nearer the same age and proficiency, while their attendance is more regular and punctual; the studies are less various, and the books more uniform; the classes are fewer, and the number in each class greater; the recitations are not as numerous, but longer, and accompanied with more of oral instruction and practical illustration; the teachers are better paid, better qualified, and employed for a longer time; and parents exhibit more interest in the prosperity of the school: in fine, although these schools differ from each other in these respects, and many of them fall below the standard required, still they embrace more of the elements of a good school, in happier combination, than the district schools.

Although the number of children in these schools does not exceed 12,000, there is expended for tuition alone at least \$200,000, or more than is provided for the education of the other 70,000 children in more than 1600 district schools.

Could the intelligence, the parental interest, and pecuniary means, which are thus withdrawn, be brought back to the common schools, these schools would soon partake of the improvements of the age, better teachers would be employed, and the length of the schools prolonged to ten months in the year. As it is, the prosperity of the private schools is a pretty sure indication of the inferiority or deficiency of the district schools, and the most powerful cause to sink them lower and lower. Under their direct and indirect operation, the great mass of the children of the community are doomed to an inferior or imperfect school education, while a few, without any merit or superior capacity of their own, but from the mere accidents of parentage and wealth, enjoy the highest privileges of moral and intellectual improvement. True it is, that many of the former, by mere force of native talent and self-training, make up in after life for the deficiency of their school education; and many of the latter are no better for all their advantages, are even ruined by the false no-

tions of superiority engendered and fostered by private schools.

It is my firm conviction, that the common schools of the state can be made so good, within the range of studies which it is desirable to embrace in them, that wealth cannot purchase better advantages in private schools, and at the same time be so cheap as to be within reach of the poorest child. It will be a bright day for our state, and a pledge of our future progress and harmony as a people, when the children of the rich and the poor are found, more generally than they now are, side by side in the same school and on the same play-ground, without knowing or caring for any other distinctions than such as industry, capacity, or virtue, may make.

But I have no expectation of seeing this realized, until the support of the common schools is made to rest in part on the property of the whole community, and until the causes which now make private schools to some extent necessary are removed. As long as the majority of a school society or town are content with a single school in each district, for children of every age, of both sexes, and in every variety of study, and as long as the majority of a district are content to pack away their children in such school-houses as may be found in more than two-thirds of all the districts of the state; to employ one teacher in summer and another in winter, and not the same teacher for two summers or two winters in succession; and to employ, for even the shortest period, teachers who have no experience, and no special training for their delicate and difficult duties; so long will it be the duty of such parents as know what a good education is, or have felt the want of it in themselves, and are able and willing to make sacrifices to secure it for their children, to provide or patronize private schools. But it is no excuse for such, because their own children are provided with attractive, commodious, and healthy schoolhouses, with well trained and experienced teachers, and good books, to go to the district school meeting to vote down every proposition to build a new schoolhouse, or to repair a dilapidated, repulsive, unhealthy old one; to supply the same with fuel, and all proper appendages and accommodations; to employ a good teacher for a suitable period of the year; or to purchase a small library, by which the blessings and advantages of good books may be made available to the poor as well as the rich. The progress of school improvement, dependent as it is on so many influences and complex interests, is slow and difficult enough under the most favorable circumstances; but when it is opposed, or even not aided, not only by those into whose souls the iron of avarice has entered, or by others, who, not having enjoyed or felt the want of superior advantages themselves, are satisfied that what was good enough for them forty years ago is good enough for their children now, but by those who have shown their opinion of the necessity of improvement by withdrawing their own children from the common schools, it is a hopeless, despairing work indeed.

12. SCHOOL DISTRICT OR SOCIETY LIBRARIES.

The returns of school visitors show that but few libraries have been established during the past year in the several school districts of the state, and that the

whole number in existence does not exceed twenty. These are all the donations of individuals.

In the state of New York, during the same period, \$106,000 were appropriated, and \$94,998.58 actually expended in the purchase of libraries for every one of her ten thousand school districts. One half of the money was derived from public funds, and the other half was raised by direct tax. The whole number of books in all the district libraries at the close of 1840 was 422,459. At the close of 1843, \$530,000 will have been expended in the purchase of more than two millions of volumes, accessible to every family and every individual in the state.

"Although an injudicious choice of books," says Governor Seward, in his late annual message, "is sometimes made, these libraries generally include history and biography, voyages and travels, works on natural history and the physical sciences, treatises upon agriculture, commerce, manufactures and the arts, and judicious selections from modern literature. Henceforth, no citizen who shall have improved the advantages offered by our common schools, and the District Libraries, will be without some scientific knowledge of the earth, its physical condition and phenomena, the animals that inhabit it, the vegetables that clothe it with verdure, and the minerals under its surface, the physiology, and the intellectual powers of man, the laws of mechanics, and their practical uses, those of chemistry and their application to the arts, the principles of moral and political economy, the history of nations, and especially that of our own country, the progress and triumph of the democratic principle in the governments on this continent, and the prospects of its ascendancy throughout the world, the trials and faith, valor and constancy of our ancestors, with the inspiring examples of benevolence, virtue and patriotism exhibited in the lives of the benefactors of mankind. The fruits of this enlightened and beneficent enterprise are chiefly to be gathered by our successors. But the present generation will not be altogether unrewarded. Although many of our citizens may pass the District Library, heedless of the treasure it contains, the unpretending volumes will find their way to the fire-side, diffusing knowledge, increasing domestic happiness, and promoting public virtue."

"It is impossible," remarks the Superintendent of common schools, in his last annual report, "to contemplate the fruits already realized from this part of our system of public instruction, without the highest gratification. The circulation of half a million of valuable books among our fellow citizens, without charge and without price, is a greater benefaction to our race than would be the collection in any one place of ten times the number of volumes. And when we reflect that in five years there will be two millions of such books in free and constant circulation among those who most need them, and who are most unable to procure them, whose minds will thus be diverted from frivolous and injurious occupations, and employed upon the productions of the learned and wise of all ages, we shall find ourselves unable to set bounds to the mighty influences that will operate upon the moral and intellectual character of our state."

"No philanthropist, no friend of his country and her glorious institutions, can contemplate these results, and the incalculable consequences they must produce upon a population of nearly three millions of souls, without blessing a kind Providence for casting our lot where the cultivation and improvement of the human mind are so eminently the objects of legislative care, or without feeling that every citizen in his station is bound to forward the great work, until we are as intelligent as we are free."

It is impossible to add any thing to the force of the above example or remarks, or to soften the humiliating contrast presented in the simple statement of the facts as they exist in the two states.

It is to be hoped, however, that Connecticut, with a population much more compact and homogeneous, and with avails of public funds set apart for the education of every child, more than four times as great as is

similarly provided in New York, will hold out some inducements for school societies or districts to provide themselves with libraries of well selected books for the older children and teachers of the school, and for the inhabitants generally. If \$12,000, or twice that amount, of the undivided income of the school fund for the past year could be set apart as "library money," to be drawn by school societies or districts, as the public money is now drawn, on condition that a like amount be raised by tax, or individual subscription, and both sums expended by the school visitors in the purchase of suitable books, it would give an impulse to the schools, and diffuse a permanent interest and intelligence through the community, which a much larger sum, expended as at present, can never accomplish.

Should any appropriation be made, it is worthy of consideration whether it would not be better to have the whole sum expended in the purchase of a society library, and the books placed in as many cases as there are districts, each to pass in succession through them all, instead of buying as many distinct libraries as there are districts. By the latter course there will, almost of necessity, be many books of the same kind in the different districts, the range of selection in each district will be limited, and the interest of novelty be soon lost. By the former, each district will at any one time have access to as many books as under the other plan, and, in the end, to all the books in the several districts; and the interest of the readers will be kept fresh by a constant supply of new authors. By local regulations, the cases could be returned to the librarian of the society, every six months, for inspection, as well as exchange, and thus the books be more likely to be preserved, and any damage or loss assessed to the proper district.

13. LECTURES AND OTHER MEANS OF POPULAR EDUCATION.

In the cities and populous villages, within the past year, libraries, lectures, classes for mutual instruction, debates and other forms of the lyceum system have flourished more or less extensively. In four of our principal cities, there are libraries connected with young men's institutes, numbering over 12,000 volumes. It is to be hoped that all these forms of popular instruction will become more and more parts of a complete system.

14. CONTROVERSIES AND LITIGATION.

Most of the local controversies mentioned by school visitors, have risen out of the location of schoolhouses, or a misunderstanding of the school law. They usually result in a division of the district, so that both parties are in the end, losers, or else in the establishment of private schools. In all these controversies, the rights and interests of children are too often forgotten, and before any final decision can be had, many of them grow up beyond the usual school age. The remedies are, the timely counsel of school visitors and peace makers, and some disinterested tribunal, to which any aggrieved party can appeal in any doings under the school law, or for information and advice as to its true meaning. Such a tribunal in many cases, the committee of the school society now are, but this committee are not always sufficiently removed from the theatre of the war, to be entirely uncommitted.

15. ALTERATIONS OF THE SCHOOL LAW.

Under the foregoing topics, I have suggested incidentally the most essential points in which our school system can be improved. In the accompanying Remarks on the History and Present Condition of the Law, I have gone more into detail.

The most important suggestions of school visitors, are incorporated into the draft of a school law, herewith presented, in which nothing more is attempted than to arrange the existing provisions under appropriate heads, and to make some points clear, which are now understood differently.

Should it not be thought advisable by the Board, or the Legislature, to enter upon a complete revision of the law, at this time, a summary of its present provisions, under appropriate heads, with reference to the date, title, and section of the act in which each provision is found, seems indispensable.

Nearly a half century has elapsed since our school system was subjected to a thorough revision. At that time, the common schools were the main reliance of the whole community, for the elementary education of children. They constituted the broad platform where all, rich and poor, enjoyed equal privileges, and had a fair start in the race of life. So universal were their advantages diffused, that a native of Connecticut, of mature age, who could not read or write, was not to be found in the whole length or breadth of the land. Our system and our schools were pointed to as models for imitation, and our republican equality of condition, and prosperity as a state, were regarded as the fruits of a wise educational policy. In the mean time, great changes have taken place, and great progress has been made in every other department of effort among ourselves, and more has been done at home and abroad to organize and perfect systems of public instruction than was ever before attempted.

HENRY BARNARD, 2D.,

Secretary of the Board of Commissioners of common schools.

HARTFORD, May, 1841.

EXPLANATION.

FIGURE I represents a perspective view of the front and one side.

FIGURE II represents the general arrangements of the interior.

FIGURE III represents an end view of one range of seats and desks, and sections of one seat.

The building stands 60 feet from the highway, near the centre of a dry, elevated, triangular shaped lot which slopes a little to the south and east. Much the larger portion of the lot is in front, affording a pleasant play ground, while in the rear there is a woodshed, and other appropriate buildings, with a separate yard for boys and girls. The walls are of brick, and are hollow so as to save expense in securing the antae or pilasters, and to prevent dampness. This building is 33 feet 6 inches long, 21 feet 8 inches wide, and 18 feet 9 inches high from the ground to the eaves, including 2 feet base or underpinning. The frieze and cornice are of wood.

The entries AA. one for boys and the other for girls, are in the rear of the building, through the woodshed, which with the yard is also divided by a partition. Each entry is 7 feet 3 inches, by 9 feet 3 inches, and is supplied with a scraper and mat for the feet, and shelves and hooks for outer garments.

The school room is 24 feet 5 inches long by 19 feet 4 inches wide, and 15 feet 6 inches high in the clear, allowing an area of 472 feet, including the recess for the teacher's platform, and an allowance of 200 cubic feet of air to a school of 36.

The teacher's platform B is 5 feet 2 inches wide by 6 feet deep, including 3 feet of recess, and 9 inches high. On it stands a table, the legs of which are set into the floor, so as to be firm, and at the same time moveable, in case the platform is needed for declamation or other exercises of the scholars. Back of the teacher is a range of shelves *b*, already supplied with a library of near 400 volumes and a globe, outline maps, and other apparatus. On the top of the case is a clock. A black board 5 feet by 4 is suspended on weights and steadied by a groove on each end, so as to admit of being raised and lowered by the

Plans of new Schoolhouse, District No. 6, Windsor.

Fig. 1.

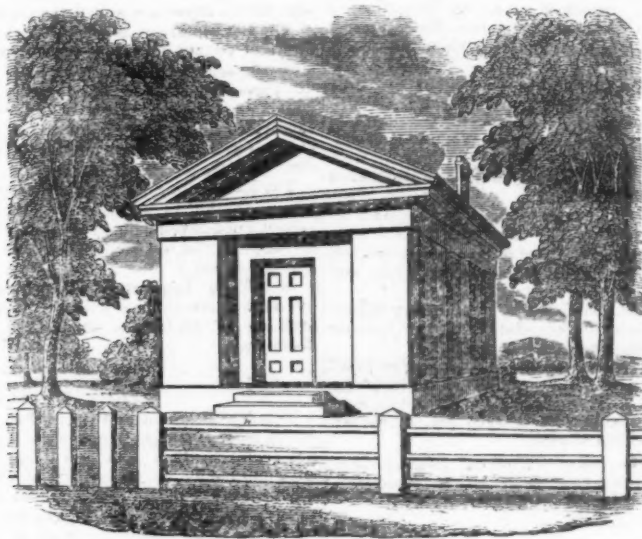


Fig. 2.

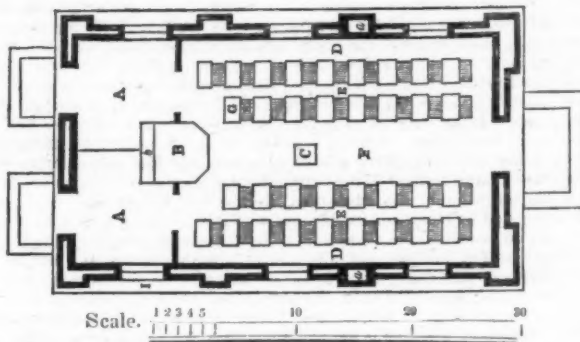
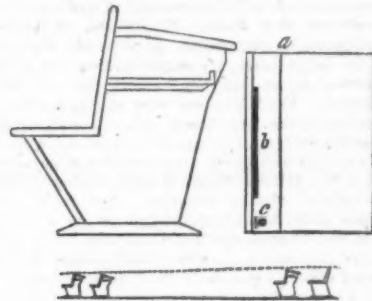


Fig. 3.



teacher, directly in front of the book case, and in full view of the whole school. At the bottom of the black board is a trough to receive the chalk and the sponge, or soft cloth.

The passages D D are two feet wide and extend round the room.

E E are 13 inches, and allow of easy access to the seats and desks on either hand.

F is 5 feet three inches, and in the center stands an open stove C, the pipe of which goes into one of the flues a. The temperature is regulated by a thermometer.

The aisles E E and F have a special reference to the doors.

Each pupil is provided with a desk G, and seat H, the front of the former constituting the back or support of the latter, which slopes $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches in 16. The seat also inclines a little from the edge. The seats vary in height, from $9\frac{1}{2}$ inches to 15, the youngest children occupying those nearest the platform. The desks are two feet long by 18 inches wide, with a shelf beneath for books, and a groove on the back side, a [Fig. 3.] to receive a slate, with which each desk is furnished by the district. The upper surface of the desk, except 3 inches of the most distant portion, slopes 1 inch in a foot, and the edge is in the same perpendicular line with the front of the seat. The level portion of the desk has a groove running along the line of the slope, b [Fig. 3.] so as to prevent pencils and pens from rolling off, and an opening, c [Fig. 3.] to receive an ink-stand. These are of metal, and shaped like the section of a cone, and are covered by a metallic lid, they can be removed when not in use in a tin case with a shelf perforated with holes to receive the given number of ink-cones, to the case back of the teacher.

The windows I, three on the north and three on the south side, contain each 40 panes of 8 by 10 glass, are hung (both upper and lower sash) with weights so as to admit of being raised or lowered conveniently. The sills are three feet from the floor. Those on the south side are to be provided with curtains or outside blinds. It would be better if the windows in a southern or western exposure were glazed with ground glass, which softens without obstructing the light.

The proper ventilation of the room is provided for by the lowering of the upper sash and by an opening 14 inches by 18, near the ceiling, into the flue a which leads into the open air. This opening can be enlarged, diminished, or entirely closed by a shutter controlled by a cord. There should have been an opening near the floor into both the flues a a, with an arrangement like the register of a furnace, so as to have reached the carbonic acid gas, which being heavier than atmospheric air, settles to the lowest place in the room. This however can be reached by opening the doors at the two extremes of the room, and allowing a current of pure air to sweep through like a broom, at the time of recess.

The sides of the room are ceiled all round with wood as high as the window sill, which, as well as the rest of the wood work of the interior, is painted to resemble oak.

Along the walls on one side of front door is suspended Mitchell's large Map of the United States, and on the other his Map of the world on Mercator's projection. Between the windows are maps of Connecticut, Massachusetts, Palestine and other portions of the earth mentioned in Scripture, and Catherwood's large colored plan of Jerusalem.

The following among other articles of apparatus have been purchased for this school. Numerical frame or abacus—set of geometrical solids—set of blocks to illustrate cube root—diagrams of geometrical figures—globe—orrery—tellurium or season machine—tide dial—moveable blackboard and a slate for each scholar.

The library is supplied with the following books for the use of the teacher.

Webster's Dictionary, Worcester's edition—Calmet's Dictionary of the Bible—Encyclopedia Americana, 13 vols—Murray's Encyclopedia of Geography—Cyclopedia of History—Haywood's Gazetteer—Blake's Biographical Dictionary—Coe's Lessons in Drawing—Mayo's Lessons on Objects—Abbott's Teacher—Palmer's Prize Essay—Davis' Teacher Taught—Dunn's School master's Manual—Dwight's Teacher's Friend—Wines' "How shall I govern my school?"—Alcott's

Confessions of a schoolmaster—Alcott's two days in a primary school—Alcott's Account of the first district school, Hartford—Wood's Account of the Sessional School, Edinburgh—Stow's Glasgow Training System—Cousin's Report on Education in Prussia—Cousin and Cuiver's Education in Holland—Professor Stowe on Education in Europe—Journal and Annals of Education, 8 vols.—Massachusetts Common School Journal, vol. 1 and 2—Connecticut Common School Journal.

The following sets comprise the reading for the scholars and their parents.

THE SCHOOL LIBRARY, large and juvenile series as far as published, 26 vols. Published by Marsh, Capen, Lyon & Webb, 33 Washington st., Boston, and consist of books which have been prepared with special reference for school libraries, and approved by each member of the Massachusetts Board of education.

THE DISTRICT SCHOOL LIBRARY, 3 series, 145 vols., published by Harper & Brothers 82 Cliff st., New York. These works have been approved and recommended by the present and former Superintendent of common schools in New York, and by Governors Marcy and Seward.

THE SCHOOL LIBRARY, 121 vols., published by the Sunday School Union, Philadelphia. These works are intended mainly for juvenile reading, and have been long before the Christian public.

THE CHRISTIAN LIBRARY, 45 vols., published by the American Tract Society, N. York. This set is intended to meet the wants of the young and old for a higher order of moral and religious reading, than is embraced in works of history, biography, travels, &c., which are usually selected for school or public libraries.

* * * *The house was built by Mr. James Burnham, District Committee, Mr. L. M. Smith. Building Committee, Messrs. Isaac Hayden, Samuel W. Ellsworth and Edward B. Munsell.*

HISTORY AND PROGRESS OF SCHOOL DISTRICT LIBRARIES.

The District Library system owes its origin and sudden extension, in a great measure, to the unwearied efforts and liberality of a native of Connecticut, Gen. James Wadsworth, of Geneseo, New York. By his suggestions and efforts, aided by Mr. Fuller and other members of the Legislature, the re-publication and distribution of Hall's "Lectures on school keeping," among the different school districts was effected. These lectures were widely read by teachers and parents, and led to the very natural idea, of supplying all of the children, as well as the teachers and parents of districts, with other books suited to their capacity and wants. General Dix, superintendent of common schools, in his annual Report in 1834, recommended the establishment of school district libraries. The recommendation was not acted upon until 1835, when through the exertions principally of Mr. Tracy, in the Senate, and Mr. Patterson, in the House, school districts were authorized to raise twenty dollars by tax, for this object. Unwearied efforts were made to induce the inhabitants of school districts, to raise the sum necessary to purchase a suitable number of books to constitute a library. Gen. Wadsworth offered to pay one-fourth of the twenty dollars in all the districts in Avon and Geneseo. The proposition was received with cold indifference. Twenty dollars were offered to the first five districts in Henrietta, which should act under the law, but the offer was not accepted for several years. The Rev. Mr. Page, was induced to visit and give lectures on the subject in all the towns of Livingston county, but with little apparent success.

In 1838, Governor Marcy, in reference to the disposition of the United States Deposit Fund, recommended that a portion of its avails should be appropriated to each district, which should raise by taxation an equal amount, for the establishment of a district library. This portion of the message was referred to the Committee on Colleges and Common Schools, of which on the part of the House, the Hon. D. D. Barnard was chairman. In the report from his pen, the education and employment of competent teachers, as the first great feature of any system of public instruction, and then the establishment of libraries of well selected books in each district, were discussed in a masterly manner. In the bill accompanying the report, more than \$100,000 was appropriated for the last object. With several modifications, the bill became the glorious Library law of 1838, by which \$53,000 a year, for three years, were appropriated from the public treasury, and the same amount, raised by direct tax, for the purchase of books in the several districts of the state. This bill was saved at a critical period, by the exertions of Mr. Patterson, who was then speaker of the House. In 1839, the operation of the law was extended to five instead of three years, which will require, before the close of 1843, the expenditure of *five hundred and thirty thousand dollars*, and lead to the purchase of more than *two millions* of volumes. There is nothing in the annals of modern legislation, more broadly beneficent than this—nothing even in the legislation of the same state in reference to her gigantic system of internal improvements, so well calculated to develop all the resources of her soil, to carry intelligence to the workshop, the counting room and every department of business, and scatter the pleasures of knowledge broadcast over the state.

The example of New York has already had its influence on other states.

The constitution of Michigan, adopted in 1836, makes it the duty of the Legislature to provide for the establishment of libraries, as soon as the circumstances of the state will permit.

The Legislature of Massachusetts in 1837, authorized the expenditure of twenty dollars by each school district, for the purchase of a district school library. To supply the want of books suitable for this purpose, the Board of Education have caused to be prepared a collection of books to be entitled "THE SCHOOL LIBRARY."—The Library consists of two series—one for children of ten or twelve years of age and under; and the other for advanced scholars and their parents.

The Legislature of New Jersey has made a similar provision for the establishment of these Libraries; and the Trustees of the school Fund have made a selection of 50 volumes, and recommended them to the districts, under the name of the "New Jersey School Library."

In 1839, the Legislature of Connecticut made a similar provision, but as it is left optional with the district to act under it or not, but little has as yet been accomplished, and that through individual liberality.

PRIMARY SCHOOLS.

The establishment of Primary Schools for young children, is one of the most important steps in the history of public instruction in this country. This was first done in Boston, in 1818, and was effected mainly by the efforts of Elisha Ticknor. Mr. Ticknor was born in Lebanon, Connecticut, in 1757, removed to New Hampshire in 1774, and subsequently to Boston, where he became principal of the Free Grammar school at the south end, till 1795. He left this post on account of impaired health, but continued to take an active interest in the public schools of the city. So early as 1805 he called the attention of his friends to the neglected condition of the young children, especially among the poor. By the then existing regulations of the public schools, these schools were not open to children under seven years of age, and to those only who could read in plain English lessons. This amount of instruction could be readily given in the family by educated mothers, or in schools supported at the expense of those who were able and willing to pay for such instruction. But for the children of the poor, the uneducated or the unwilling, there was no provision, and the consequence was that a large number of the youthful population of the city were growing up without any education. It was not till in May 1818, that assisted by Hon. James Savage (who is still living and who needs no other mention to cause him to be remembered with gratitude by the poor of his own and other cities, than that he was the author in 1817 of the first "Institution for Savings") he was able to induce the select-men of Boston to insert an article in the warrant for the town meeting in June, to see if the citizens would authorize the opening of a school at the public expense, for children under the age of seven years. In this meeting held on the 11th of June 1818, five thousand dollars was voted for that year, to begin the experiment, and a committee of about twenty-five appointed to superintend the enterprise. Of this Committee Mr. Ticknor was Chairman and continued to hold that post of labor and responsibility to these schools, till his death in 1821. The proposition was opposed in the outset principally on the ground of expense, as every step for improvement of common education there and elsewhere has always experienced. In the second year an addition of fifty per cent. was made to the town appropriations and almost every year since, the grant from the public treasury has increased to meet the expenditures for teachers and buildings.

In 1818-19, eighteen primary schools were established.

In 1827 there were 56 schools in operation, with 3236 children supported at an annual expense of \$14,000.

In 1834 there were 63 schools, and 4100 scholars supported at an expense of \$16,859.16.

In 1839 there 93 schools, and 5402 scholars supported at an expense of \$28,000.

From Boston, Primary schools have been introduced into other cities and populous places. In Lowell there are twenty two; in Nantucket, seven; in Charlestown, twenty; in Roxbury, fourteen; in Portland (Maine), ten; and in Providence (Rhode Island) ten.

They were established in the city of New York in 1831 by the Public school society, and in 1840 there were 57, with 7581 children.

In Philadelphia, twenty-six Primary schools were established in 1836 in connexion with the other public schools of the city, and in 1840 there were fifty-six, and numbering 7,000 children.

In Connecticut there are primary departments connected with the district schools in Hartford, New London, Bridgeport, Middletown, Norwich, and a few other central districts in other towns. But these are altogether insufficient to meet the wants of such places in regard to the education of young children.

